

# WISCONSIN WILDCARDS



# BOBCAT

*Felis rufus*

**BASIC ID:** Bobcats are larger than domestic cats, ranging from 15 to more than 50 pounds. Recognize this native feline by the small ear tufts, small feet, and short tail with a black tip only on the top side.

**HABITS:** Bobcats are secretive mammals of our northern and central forests. They eat a variety of animals, insects and plants.

**HISTORY:** Once considered a varmint, bobcats are now valuable furbearers and harvested on a limited basis by licensed hunters and trappers.

**WILD!** Juvenile bobcats without a “home” may wander more than 100 miles before establishing a territory and marking it with urine and feces.

For information: please see wildlife management publication, *The Bobcat* (WM-056), or order it at:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/PUBL](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/PUBL)

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# WISCONSIN WILDCARDS



FURBEARERS



# RED FOX

*Vulpes vulpes*

**BASIC ID:** Red foxes weigh 10-15 lbs. and may be red, sandy blonde, black or silver with bushy, white-tipped tails. They usually have a white chin, throat and belly.

**HABITS:** Red foxes eat plants and insects, but prefer small mammals such as mice or cottontails. They live in fields and woodlots and are most active at night.

**HISTORY:** Farming and logging by early settlers increased fox habitat. Today, foxes compete with expanding coyote populations for space. They are, however, still plentiful.

**WILD!** Foxes often “bite off more than they can chew” by killing more than they can eat at the moment. Extra food is often buried for future use.

For information: please see wildlife management publication, *The Red Fox* (WM-063), or order it at:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/PUBL](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/PUBL)

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# WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

FURBEARERS



# GRAY FOX

*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*

**BASIC ID:** The gray fox weighs 9-11 lbs. and has short, gray and red fur with a black stripe down the top of its tail.

**HABITS:** Gray foxes prefer bluffs, hills, woodlands, and field edges. They are secretive and hunt at night for small mammals, insects, birds, seeds, nuts and berries.

**HISTORY:** Gray foxes are most common in southwest Wisconsin and in the Southern Kettle Moraine. Records suggest that the gray fox has always been common in southern WI.

**WILD!** Gray foxes have retractable claws (like cats) and are excellent tree climbers. They climb to rest, feed, and escape predators.

For information: please see wildlife management publication, *The Gray Fox* (WM-005), or order it at:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/PUBL](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/PUBL)

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# WISCONSIN WILDCARDS



FURBEARERS



# BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs) FOR TRAPPING

## WHAT ARE BMPs?

Science-based recommendations from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) that seek to maintain regulated trapping as a safe and acceptable tool of furbearer management.

## HOW ARE BMPs DEVELOPED?

Currently, 32 states have conducted trap research to test for selectivity, efficiency and practicality. Animal welfare is a primary concern. Traps and injuries are tested consistently with methods established by the International Organization of Standards (ISO).

Educational materials are being developed for agencies and organizations to further trapper education. Wisconsin DNR and the Wisconsin Trappers Association have been in full support of and active in several BMP projects.

For more information, please visit:

[www.furbearermgmt.org](http://www.furbearermgmt.org)

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# WISCONSIN WILDCARDS



FURBEARERS



# FURBEARER TRAPPING – YESTERDAY AND TODAY –

**TRAPPING OF YESTERYEAR:** “The Fur Trade Era” involved native people and Europeans from the 1600s to mid-1800s. It ended when market demands declined and furbearers became scarce from over-harvesting.

**TRAPPING TODAY:** Regulated trapping continues to be a legitimate outdoor activity rich in history and culture. Wisconsin Trapper Education programs teach wildlife and furbearer management, laws, ethics, and humane trapping methods. Benefits include the reduction of furbearer overpopulations, nuisance animals, crop damage and certain wildlife diseases.

For information on trapper education and trapping visit our web site at:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/trap](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/trap)

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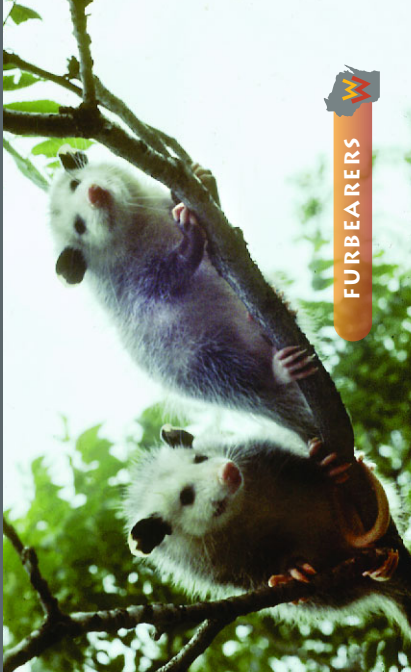


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# WISCONSIN WILDCARDS



FURBEARERS

# OPOSSUM

*Didelphis virginiana*

**BASIC ID:** The opossum has grayish-white fur; a long, naked tail; and black, hairless ears. Its prehensile tail and opposable “big toes” on its back feet allow it to grasp and hold objects.

**HABITS:** Opossums are true omnivores and eat just about anything. They are solitary animals that switch dens every couple of days or so.

**HISTORY:** This marsupial (pouched animal) is actually a southern species that migrated northward. It is not well adapted to cold weather and will often have frostbite on its ears or tail.

**WILD!** A new litter of opossums contains as many as 17 to 21 babies. The whole litter weighs less than a penny!

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/eeek/critter/mammal/opossum/htm>

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# WISCONSIN WILDCARDS



FURBEARERS



# STRIPED SKUNK

*Mephitis mephitis*

**BASIC ID:** There is no mistaking this animal! Striped skunks have black glossy fur with white stripes. Their contrasting color and strong odor serves as a warning to other animals.

**HABITS:** Striped skunks live anywhere they can find shelter. Mainly nocturnal, they are opportunistic feeders and eat insects, small mammals, fruits, grasses and carrion.

**HISTORY:** This wide-ranging animal can live almost anywhere, including under rocks and buildings. Winter is a difficult time for skunks, and many will den up together for warmth. Striped skunks are trapped for their fur. Many are killed by cars during the breeding season.

**WILD!** Perfume makers use skunk essence (smelly liquid) in high quality, expensive perfumes!

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